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PRESS RELEASE

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IDELFONSO ESPARZA CONVICTED OF MURDER

Today, a Madera Superior Court jury convicted Idelfonso Esparza of the first degree murder of George Ganas according to Michael Keitz, District Attorney for Madera County.

In the afternoon of April 5th, 2004, victim George Ganas encountered Sureno gang members Idelfonso Esparza and Rafael Rodriguez at Yosemite Avenue and Gateway Drive in Madera. Esparza opened fire and shot Ganas in the back, killing him. Esparza and Rodriguez fled the scene of the murder, and a pursuit evolved with CHP officers. Rodriguez was captured, however, Esparza eluded law enforcement.

Rafael Rodriguez was convicted and sentenced in the fall of 2009 for his participation in the crime and is serving 15 years in state prison.

In 2008, the Madera Police Department received information that Esparza was residing in Mexico. With the assistance of U.S. Marshals and the Mexican authorities, Esparza was located and extradited to Madera.

Esparza was convicted of first degree murder, with the special circumstances of committing the murder from a motor vehicle and while being an active gang member. The jury also found true other special allegations. Esparza, who was 19 years old at the time of the murder, is to be sentenced on May 25th, 2010, in Madera Superior Court. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Daley prosecuted the case.